

Saint Jude Thaddeus: His Life and His Work



by Father Leo C Gainor, O.P., M.A.

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Introduction

One of the spiritual wonders of today is the increasing surge of devotion to Saint Jude Thaddeus. Even more marvelous are the miraculous results of his intercession with God for his friends on earth. He listens patiently to trivial requests and he heeds heart-rending cries of desperation. His clients have discovered that he is especially effective in solving difficult problems. They feel that God has appointed him as a specialist in hopeless cases. The favors he obtains from God are an avalanche of graces poured into the valley of troubled lives. Often he amazes his urgent clients by his speedy and effectual help.

The strange thing is that we know more about his interests and his activities than we do about the saint himself. We have a natural curiosity about this generous helper, but precise history has drawn only a miniature picture of him. We turn to the Scriptures and to divine tradition, official sources, but they do not sufficiently enlarge the picture to satisfy our understandable inquisitiveness. So we go to ancient records and early writings. They enrich the background and vivify the canvas, thereby giving us a satisfactory perspective of Jude's colorful life and courageous career.

This little work of love is intended to bring Saint Jude more actively into the pattern of our lives; to help us to know him more intimately and hopefully. It is a prayerful effort to increase confidence and devotion to him among us, his present friends, and to introduce him proudly to strangers. For old and new friends alike, may this personal acquaintance with Saint Jude increase admiration and strengthen confidence in him during our difficult and

troubled days on the road that winds uphill all the way to heaven.

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A Letter to Christ

The torrid morning sun foretold another hot, humid day. There was no breeze on the palace porch except the stir caused by the huge fan as a sweltering bronzed slave waved it over King Abgar's leprous body. The king, dressed in loose white clothing, was reclining on a long, couch-like chair. He was in evident physical distress and his restlessness indicated an inner impatience.

"Why isn't the captain here?" he asked petulantly. "What keeps him?"

"Any moment now, Your Highness," the soft-spoken secretary replied. "He probably has stopped to change into uniform to make a proper appearance before Your Majesty."

Suddenly activity was heard in the courtyard. The king, aware of it, became quiet but tense as he waited. Soon the captain and his attendants were announced and they stood at attention before Abgar, who acknowledged their presence. Impetuously waiving the formalities, he signaled his desire to be alone with the captain. The soldiers and the court attendants quietly withdrew, all except the secretary, Hannan, and the slave with the fan.

"Well, Captain Cumra," asked the king, "did you see the Jewish Healer? Did He accept my invitation? Have you

brought Him with you?"

The Report

The captain replied quickly to ward off the king's impatience: "Yes, and no, Your Highness. I did see Him and one of His followers whom He called Jude. They were most considerate, but the Wonder Worker cannot come."

Seeing the sharp disappointment in the king's face, he hastily added: "But He was most courteous. He accepted your letter, and I bring you an encouraging message from Him, and this pledge."

The captain carefully unrolled a fine linen cloth and showed it to the king.

"See, Your Highness, it bears the imprint of His face, a likeness of Him they call the Christ."

The king looked long and intently at the picture and his tired voice showed his dejection. He adjusted his pain-weary body to a more comfortable position as he asked:

"Why did He send this picture? Who is this Jude? Start at the beginning and tell me all. Why didn't He come? Did this Christ take offense that I, a foreigner, sent one of my soldiers to petition Him to come and to heal me? Did you explain why I cannot go to His country? The state of my health? The political complications? Did He understand? Please sit down and tell me all. Hannan, order refreshments for the captain. See that his men are cared for in the courtyard."

So the captain started at the beginning. Before we follow his recital, perhaps a little background is needed, so that we may understand more clearly the situation of the sick king and his military ambassador.

The Background

King Abgar ruled over his little kingdom in Mesopotamia from his capital city of Edessa. The territory was sparsely settled and the inhabitants widely scattered, Edessa being the only town of considerable size. It has, incidentally, had a checkered existence since the time of King Abgar, for it has gone through successive dynasties - the Greeks, Syrians, Parthians, Romans, and Turks having taken turns in ruling the territory, which has successively passed under pagan, Christian, and Mohammedan influence.

Today the ancient Edessa is called Urfa. It is a city of about 40,000 inhabitants, mostly Kurds, Turks, and Armenians. Urfa is located on a branch of the Euphrates River, just over the boundaries of Syria and Lebanon, in southeast Turkey. It lies about 400 miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee and the town of Capharnaum, and it is almost due north from Damascus in Syria.

King Abgar had contracted leprosy, or at least a malignant skin disease then so prevalent in warm countries. He had heard the stories of the wonderful Healer in Palestine and the reports of the instant cures of lepers by a simple touch of His hand.

Greatly impressed by these travelers' stories, he saw a remedy for his own affliction if he could induce Christ to come to him. He himself could not go to a country controlled by the Romans without involving state difficulties. So he entrusted the mission to his reliable Captain Cumra, who, without an entourage, could enter Palestine incognito.

The Letter

Before sending the captain, King Abgar dictated a letter which Cumra was to carry with him. The king followed the

letter-writing custom of the day and began the letter with an introduction of himself: "Abgar Ouchama, King, to Jesus, the Good Physician, who has appeared in the country of Jerusalem, greeting." He continued by praising Christ for the cures He had wrought. He said he had concluded that Jesus was either God Himself, who had come down from heaven, or the Son of God, "who does these things." Abgar then implored Christ to come to him and to cure his illness, which had been of long duration. He wrote that he had heard that the Jews were murmuring against Jesus and plotting against His life. He concluded with this invitation: "Come, therefore, to me, for although my city is small, it is honorable and it will suffice for both of us."

The Captain's Story

With the captain now comfortably seated and refreshed, let us pick up his story. He starts with his arrival in Palestine, wasting no words on the trip itself or any of the inconveniences.

"I sought Him first about the Sea of Galilee," he began in an easy manner, "for I learned He had His headquarters at a town called Capharnaum, but I was told that He was on His way to Jerusalem and that He would probably pass through Jericho. I followed His route, which was easy, for all the people along the way were talking about His cures. I came to a little village where there was great excitement, for He had cured ten lepers there a few days before. I thought of you, my King, when I heard that, and I hurried on."

The captain paused and the king nodded for him to continue.

He resumed. "I finally found His temporary lodgings in a town they call Ephraim, near the wilderness. I was told that

He had retired with His followers and was spending the time in seclusion, before going down to Jerusalem. Placing myself outside His quarters, I awaited an opportunity to talk to Him or one of His men. I felt I was now so near to delivering your message, my King, that I was not to be denied."

Again the captain paused and the king indicated the refreshments.

After Cumra set down his glass, the king asked: "And then what?"

"And then, Your Majesty, He walked out with one of His men whose name I learned later was Jude. They were in deep conversation but I modestly placed myself in their path and they observed me. I respectfully saluted the Miracle Worker and humbly stated my mission, that I was a legate from a foreign king."

The captain's face lighted up as he reached the high point of his adventure:

"Oh, King, if you could have seen His face! So kind, so tender, so compassionate! He and His companion stopped. He seated Himself by the roadside and made a gesture for Jude to read your letter aloud. He looked at me with those expressive eyes and slowly, as though reluctantly, He gave His reply.

"I remember every word - they are engraved in my memory. He called me by name and He said:

"Tell your king, blessed art thou who hast not seen Me but hast believed in Me. As for My coming to him, tell him I must accomplish the things appointed unto Me, those things for which I was sent, and the hour is now at hand when they must be done. But after I have been taken up into heaven I

will send one of My disciples to your king and he will cure him.'

"Then, my King, He looked knowingly at His companion, Jude, as though to convey an unspoken message to him. Perhaps he is the one to come."

The Picture of Christ

The captain paused and the king pondered this message from Christ.

His hand touched the linen cloth at his couch: "And this cloth?" he inquired.

"Oh," replied the captain; "for the minute I had forgotten, so absorbed was I in delivering His reply. You know, my King, of my sketching ability and of the portraits I have done. When He told me He could not come, I courteously asked permission to sketch His face so that I might bring the sketch back to you as a souvenir, a token from one King to another."

Cumra was almost overcome as he continued:

"His face lit up with a strange heavenly smile - an ethereal, effulgent look. Oh, King, my hand was paralyzed, and my eyes were dazzled by that shining countenance! I could not draw a line or lift a brush, yet the picture is imprinted indelibly upon my mind. When He saw my frustration, He gently took this kerchief from me and pressed it to His face. There you have His likeness, but yet not like Him, for it can never shine in that cloth as it did when I saw Him face to face.

"Then," the captain concluded, "they left me and I hurried back to report to you. I have the strongest feeling that you

will not have to suffer much longer. I feel, from what He said, that His work on this earth is nearly done and that He will soon return to His Father. Then we can expect His messenger, Jude, to come to you."

He looked at the king and quickly added: "But I fear I have exhausted you with this long story. Forgive my thoughtlessness, Your Majesty."

The king looked kindly at Cumra and answered: "Not at all, my Captain. You have done a fine job and I am proud of you. I am better already; at least my hopes are soaring. I feel that this Jude will come, and soon. My thanks, Captain."

The king and the captain remained speechless in awed reverence, each with his own thoughts. Hannan, the secretary, quietly withdrew with his notes. The fan had become motionless in the hands of the absorbed slave. The soldiers were strangely silent in the courtyard. It was as though all were in suspended animation awaiting some stupendous visitation.

Meanwhile, as Christ had predicted, "His hour had come." He was traveling the road to Jerusalem to be crucified. And Jude did not know that he was the subject of a conversation in far-off Edessa.

The king was not alone in his intense desire for help. Many people today are eagerly asking the same question he asked: "Who is this Jude?"

We shall have to start at the beginning in order to answer it satisfactorily.

Home in Galilee

A tiny valley village of Galilee was the birthplace of Jude Thaddeus. Above the little settlement rose the sloping hills with their umbrellas of green foliage, fig and olive trees. On the hillsides lay soft blankets of grass for the sheep. On the sunny side of the hills, heavy clusters of grapes hung in the vineyards. After the warm spring rains, a silvery stream trickled through the fields of wheat and barley which embroidered the small hamlet. There a stone house sheltered the newly arrived babe who nestled in his mother's arms.



On a peaceful sunny day, baby Jude woke to the morning of his earthly life. His loving mother, Mary, and his joyful father, Cleophas (sometimes called Alpheus), could not have dreamed that this newborn infant and his older brother James were destined for tremendous roles in the establishment of Christ's Church on earth - that both were to be numbered among the twelve apostles.

Nor did the parents realize how prophetic was the name they gave him, Jude Thaddeus; Jude, "giver of joy"; Thaddeus, "the greathearted one." Neither father nor mother could dream that their newborn son was to live intimately in Christ's presence, to share in His work, and to carry His message of love to distant and unknown lands. If his parents could have foreseen the difficulties and confusion that would arise regarding their son's name, Jude, they possibly would have selected another. It would have greatly simplified matters for all of us.

The Two Judes

The complexity arose because there were two Judes among the twelve apostles: Jude Thaddeus, this couple's son; and Judas, the betrayer of Christ. When Saint Matthew and Saint Mark wrote their Gospels, they attempted to avoid confusion between the two men by listing them apart. They called our Saint Jude only by the name of Thaddeus. When they listed the twelve apostles, they placed the traitor last and classified him as: "Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him." Also, in the biblical list of the apostles, in the Canon of the Mass, and in the Litany of the Saints our Saint Jude is prayed to only by the name of Thaddeus. This has helped to make him the "forgotten" saint. Later, when The Acts of the Apostles was written by Saint Luke (1:13), after the infamous Judas had passed from the sight of the living, his name was dropped from the list of the apostles, and that of Matthias, his successor, was added. Then Saint Jude Thaddeus was called by his first name, Jude, but for a long time he remained a "forgotten Jude."

As the name of the traitor Judas fades and the confusion about the two personalities clears up, the name of our Saint Jude is becoming increasingly popular, especially in our own country. More lovers of Saint Jude, and many of his grateful clients, are expressing their thanks by bestowing his name upon their sons and daughters: "Jude" and "Judith." Even Thaddeus, shortened popularly to "Thad" is found more frequently among boys' given names these days. It has long been popular in Ireland where in the old Gaelic it is "Taidg."

Boyhood

Jude Thaddeus was to learn about his blood relatives, for the Jews were proud of their family trees, and kept accurate records of their genealogies. Jude knew, for instance, that Christ and he were first cousins, for his mother and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, were blood sisters.

Gathered around the fireplace in the evening, before the night prayers were said, Jude and his brother James would listen in rapt attention as their mother would tell them about their cousin, Jesus, who had been born in Bethlehem, and who had to flee with Mary and Joseph into Egypt because King Herod had sought to kill the child. Then she would tell them of Nazareth; how Jesus was growing; about the journey she and their father had made to Nazareth before James and Jude were big enough to travel.

She told them that some day the whole family would travel to Nazareth again, when the boys were grown older. Jude would go to bed with his imagination ablaze with pictures of his wonderful cousin. He would fall asleep to dream of the time when he would be big enough to make that trip, of the time when he and his cousin would see each other face to face.

Visit to Nazareth

In time, the long desired day arrived when the family was to travel to Nazareth to visit their close relatives. It was a day of feverish excitement for the boys, who had never ventured so far from their familiar hills; moreover, they were to meet for the first time the cousin of whom they had heard so much. Jude was about nine or ten years old; old enough to travel with his parents. James, of course, was more mature and quite capable of caring for himself.

The visit occurred after the Holy Family had returned from Jerusalem where the Child Jesus, then twelve years old, had been found in the Temple on the third day. Word had trickled through to Jude's parents of the eventful trip of the Holy Family to Jerusalem; this visit of theirs was by way of a reunion for the two mothers who had not seen each other for

some years. The journey was made without mishap and the reunion proved a joyous affair.

What emotions must have filled Jude when he saw his cousin, Jesus, for the first time! Like all country children, Jude was bashful in the presence of the older and more urbane cousin. Mary, his aunt, came to his rescue with an engaging smile and a few hospitable words: This was Jude's "other" home, and he should accept it as such. Jesus, with His gracious manner, shaped the conversation into the channels of interest to the younger boy. Soon Jude lost his self-consciousness, relaxed, and talked freely to Jesus. It would have been wonderful could that conversation have been recorded for us!

Once back home again, Jude was starry eyed at all he had seen, and he carried with him a most vivid impression of Jesus. It was something like the adoration of a young boy of today for his baseball or football hero. Jude wished to be like Christ. Christ was his model, his hero. The impressionable young Jude had a new concept of life; his horizon had been broadened; his world had grown larger. Now, he had a direct motivation in life. Henceforth, he would apply himself more vigorously to his studies and his religious training.

Young Manhood

During these growing years Jude had been home-taught, for the most part, by his parents. Now he applied himself more intently. He had already mastered reading and writing; but books were scarce, handwritten, tediously produced, and costly. They were the most valued treasures in his humble home. He had learned some Jewish history from books, but most of his knowledge of his people was gained by conversation in the home and with his elders.

Jude faithfully attended the synagogue, where he was taught the formal religious observances. He was quite familiar with the Old Testament, and had committed much of it to memory. He was gifted with a retentive mind and quick comprehension. He knew, for instance, of the promised Savior, as prophesied in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah. He was unconsciously building for a future still hidden by the veil of time. These were the growing years, and they passed quickly and uneventfully, save for that never-to-be-forgotten trip to Nazareth and the meeting with Jesus. Jude was approaching the most important years of his development.

Social Life

The closely knit tribal circle necessarily limited social life to few active outside interests. Marriages were contracted between families of the village, and at an early age. Hence it was that Jude was espoused early to a girl by the name of Mary. They made their home in the small town and lived their short married life in close companionship with their respective families. Their home, a rented two-story stone building, was shared with another couple.

Hard Work

Jude now worked for himself and his wife. He became a tenant farmer, but the work was hard and the hours long. The crops were not always abundant. There were lean years for the young couple. There were other worries, too. The Jewish nation - as the rest of the then known world - had fallen prey to the Roman Eagle and the domination of the Imperial Caesars. Throughout the land there was agitation and resentment over the Roman soldiers who policed the land and imposed the taxes. The Jews were looking for a political leader who would lift the burdens of the Roman occupation.

Heavy Taxes

Jude, like all poor farmers, was loaded with an impossible burden of expenses. Nearly half of his income went for taxes. The Romans exacted a heavy assessment of one-fourth of his earnings. The Jewish tithes took almost another fourth. Then out of the half that remained, there was rent for his home, as well as other fixed expenses. So small an amount was left over for Jude and his young wife that their lot was a hard one, with little prospect of bettering themselves.

Little Information

This is the only record we have of Jude's married life. Early historians make no further mention of his wife, Mary. They give us not the slightest hint as to her abode or career, and tradition is equally silent. Certainly, we can be confident that God made provision for her participation in His work of redemption. However, we must leave her with the many holy women of those early days of Christianity whose names are written only in the golden book of heaven - the "names of those who love the Lord."

God's Plan?

In God's eternal plan, this period of Jude's life may have been so designed, in order that Jude's personal experiences might cover the same hardships, the same economic difficulties that thousands of married people encounter today, and so that we might realize more vividly Saint Jude's sympathetic understanding - of them. May we, therefore, be hopeful that this knowledge urges, him to perform his wonders in our desperate cases of this type today? This could be God's plan in, so to speak, saving Saint Jude's intense activity in desperate and hopeless cases for our own troubled and complex times.

Early Preparation

Jude had grown up. He was now a man with responsibilities. In the evenings, while the youngsters shouted merrily at play, Jude could be found sitting respectfully with the elders of the town and listening attentively to their discussions of current happenings, such as the increasing number of Roman officials and Greek merchants traveling through their land and the pagan customs they were introducing.

The patriarchs would talk about the momentous events foretold by their prophets: how the time was near at hand when the expected Savior was to come, how He would liberate their nation from the tyranny of pagan Rome. Jude was becoming an idealist, a crusader. He was by nature and by training deeply religious. He was intensely nationalistic and he had a great compassion for his fellow citizens.

Talks with Christ

Jude became restless and impatient for physical opportunity to translate his ideals into action. By now, both he and James had been to Nazareth for several eventful visits with their cousin, Jesus. They had been inspired by His conversations and His philosophy of life. His words, as a boy when He was found in the Temple, "I must be about my Father's business," long a family saying, were taking on a new and significant meaning.

Christ's "time had not yet come" to declare Himself publicly, but He was already laying the foundation on which He would build His public life. Silently testing His future co-workers in the great structure of redemption, He was gradually gathering them around Him. He did not reveal Himself fully to His cousins, but Jude and James were unconsciously

undergoing a schooling, a preparation for their future work, the new life about to start.

The Cana Wedding

When Jude was about 28 years old, tall, vigorous, and a little younger than his cousin, Jesus, the hour came when Christ was to begin His public life. The immediate occasion for the turning point was a family wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. Cana was a little town about six miles northeast of Nazareth. Today, it is a village of about 1,000 people and is named Kefr Kenna.

This wedding was evidently a large gathering. Christ was there with His mother and His disciples. Saint John does not designate by name the disciples who were present, but since it was a family affair, we can place Jude among the relatives and disciples. There he saw, to his amazement, the first public miracle performed by Christ.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, had noted that there were apparently more guests than had been anticipated and that the refreshments provided were insufficient. She tactfully called this situation to Christ's attention: "They have no wine." Jude heard her quiet remark and Christ's gentle reply: "What would you have Me do? My hour has not yet come." Jude wondered when he heard Mary say to the attendants, "Do whatever He tells you." Still puzzled, the disciple went outside to talk with some of the male guests gathered around the well.

The First Miracle

Jude and the other men in the group were interrupted in their talk by the approach of attendants carrying stone jugs. It seemed a strange time to draw water and so much of it. The men were even more inquisitive when the servants said

that Jesus had ordered them to fill the jugs and to bring them into the house, Jude followed the servants inside, with the other curious guests, to see what was transpiring. The attendants offered the jugs for Christ's inspection. He nodded His head in approval and said to them, "Draw out now, and take to the chief steward." Jude stood speechless and spellbound as he saw wine pouring from the vessels. He looked at Christ and saw the compassion for the newly wedded couple in His face; he could feel the beam of sympathy that radiated from Christ's tender heart. To save the young couple from embarrassment, Christ, at Mary's implied wish, had performed His first public miracle before Jude's very eyes.

Jude was strangely and powerfully moved by Christ's compassion, His consideration, His immediate action.

Did Jude visualize his own future activity in such situations? Did he fervently long for the intercessory power that Mary had? Did he wish with all the fire of his soul to be able to implore Christ's performance of miracles among married couples down through the centuries, even to our own times?

Whatever his thoughts, Jude instantly made his final decision. He himself had seen this miracle. He was now positive of what he had long surmised - that Christ was the expected Savior of his people.

Jude's path was clearly marked. Henceforth he would follow Christ in His travels through Palestine; he would listen breathlessly to the doctrine of love that the Master was to announce. All that remained was to return to his own village, to set his worldly affairs in order, and to be ready for the public call when the time came.

He knew it would be only a few months' waiting, for now the word of the miracle would spread. All of Galilee would be aroused and would ask: "Is this the Savior foretold by the prophets?"

He waited eagerly for the invitation to "Come, follow Me." His soul was aglow with his fervor to participate in the great work of Christ, to himself become more Christlike in his deep sympathy for his Jewish people. He was like a well-trained athlete ready for the test of his skill and stamina. But much more training was needed before he could successfully enter the contest.

Jude with Christ

After the wedding feast in Cana, Christ journeyed to Capharnaum, along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capharnaum was to become His "own city" during His public life, but on this trip He stayed there but a few days. Meanwhile, He had selected several of His disciples, and they accompanied Him to Jerusalem for the Passover, a great feast of the Jews. But Jude was not with them. His public call to follow Christ would come later.

There, at the Temple, Christ drove out the Roman bankers and the Greek merchants. They had made a market place of the sacred precincts, by their traffic in doves and other sacrificial animals and by their changing of Roman and Greek coins into the sacred (Tyrian) money required for the payment of the annual Temple tax.

Christ's drastic action caused much excitement in Jerusalem. It was in effect an announcement of His active ministry, for He told them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will rebuild it." He was, of course, referring to the temple of His body, but the Jews, in their materialistic view, believed He

was talking about the building, the Temple, which had taken forty-six years to construct and which was not yet entirely finished. Christ's public work had commenced, and Jude was soon to join His little band of followers.

Jude Is Active

Meanwhile, Jude was feverishly preparing. He had talked to the elders of the town. Long discussions were held about what Jude had heard and seen in Cana. The Passover of that year was finished in Jerusalem, and Roman soldiers and Greek merchants who had been there brought news of the excitement in the city, of Christ's appearance in the Temple, and of His extraordinary activity. The merchants were bitter at being deprived of their lucrative business, but they recognized authority in the Master who had whipped them out of the Temple. On the way through Samaria they had heard vaguely of Christ's stop at the well of Jacob, where He had talked to the Samaritan woman and declared to her that He was the Messiah. They said He was now on His way to Capharnaum and that He probably would stop to preach in the synagogues as He traveled on foot through Galilee.

Village Curiosity

The interest in this story was heightened and the curiosity of the elders increased. Was He the Messiah?

The miracles, the action at the Temple, the revelation to the Samaritan woman - all these things pointed to the arrival of the Messiah. But His words and acts indicated that Jesus was a spiritual leader, not a political liberator.

The people of Israel were yearning for a warrior king who would liberate them from their bondage to the Romans; they wanted a new Moses who would lead them out of the servitude imposed by the Caesars. What the Jews expected

of the Savior was that He would again restore the kingdom to Israel. They wanted a king to march at their head and lead them in war.

They asked Jude whether this kinsman of his, this man the Romans and Greeks spoke of, was the long expected emancipator. Would Jude join Him now that He was near? Yes, Jude would join Him and at once, but he could not convince the elders that Christ was the Anointed of the Lord. They could not, or would not, visualize this leader as the Son of God. However, Jude could wait no longer. Everything was in readiness.

The New Teacher

It was at Capharnaum that Jude joined Christ and the other apostles whom He had already selected. Christ was busily engaged in preaching in the synagogue, and Jude listened attentively as He spoke to the people. Jude was profoundly impressed by Christ's simple language, His apt illustrations, and His forceful examples taken from the everyday experiences of the people, Jude noted at once that here was a new teacher and a new message: a teacher speaking with authority; a new doctrine of love,

Jude saw, however, that, while on the surface all seemed calm, a violent storm was raging in the hearts of the Pharisees. Christ's new doctrine was the very opposite of their self-righteous teaching. Jude's eyes were opened by Christ's message and he saw the Pharisaical teachers in their true light. He realized that this fanatic sect preached and observed the outward form of religion, but shockingly neglected the spirit of the law.

It was easy for him to see that a mortal clash must inevitably ensue between Christ and the Pharisees. But he was now

irrevocably aligned with Christ and His inspired teaching. Jude had forever abandoned the fruitless and fallacious precepts of the pretenders.

An Issue Resolved

Jude was in the synagogue, an absorbed listener, when an early conflict with the Pharisees came. It focused on the observance of the Sabbath, always a vital question. This subject furnished the battleground for the Pharisees and Christ: a merciless legalism, the letter of the law, arrayed against the compassionate heart of Christ and His boundless charity.

A man with a withered hand precipitated this battle of principles. Would Christ perform a miracle and restore this man's hand to health on the Sabbath? The Pharisees suspected that He would. That would provide them with a splendid opportunity, a clear-cut case, before all the assembled people, of Christ's disregard of their sacred law.

The Inevitable Clash

Jude sensed that the issue was being clearly drawn when, with the crippled man before Him, Christ definitely raised the point: "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, to save a life?" He touched the man, and he was made whole! Christ clearly defined the clash of doctrine and practice: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." Jude saw the angry Pharisees leave the synagogue to take counsel in secret and to plan the downfall of this innovator who was gathering more and more disciples about Him. Jude was now fully aroused as to the fundamental nature of the conflict. It was a new, inspiring, and loving doctrine that Christ was unfolding.

Jude is Called

Apostles Chosen

The time had arrived for Christ to declare Himself publicly and to announce His New Law. The preliminaries were over, His apostles were gathered around Him, and Jude was there with all the enthusiasm of a novice beginning a glorious adventure. The great moment of his life had arrived, for his name was about to be announced as one of the Twelve. Christ had already determined that exact number so that it would correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel. Several of the group had already been named and had been associated with Christ for some time; now He had completed the list, and Jude Thaddeus thrilled with emotion when his name was called. He was now an official member of Christ's little band.

The Sermon on the Mount

The Twelve were to receive the first doctrinal lesson in the New Law through the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus returned from a night of solitary prayer on the mountain, and Jude, with the other apostles, joined Him in the early morning. A multitude of people - the lame, the blind, the sick, the curious - were there on the mountainside; they had been there all night awaiting the healing hand of the Savior and eager to hear His word. While Jude listened with burning intensity, Christ began to speak. It was a long sermon, as sermons are reckoned today, and the informal audience followed His words with breathless attention. As Christ unfolded the theme, there was hardly a stir among them except for an occasional gasp as some felt the sublimity of the subject matter covered. It was in vivid contrast to the Old Law which His listeners had been accustomed to hear. It was an exposition of the bond that should unite them, the bond of charity. The new doctrine was an extension, a

broader view, of the older law and it was disclosed with many practical and convincing examples,

Jude's Reaction

When Jude came down with Christ from the mountainside his head was filled with stimulating ideas of service. Christ and the apostles were to make their way to Capharnaum to sleep that night, but Jude's mind was restless with visions of activity. He projected himself into the future when he would be associated with the Master in proclaiming this law of love to his own Jewish people. In a vague way, Jude knew of the difficulties that would be encountered. He had already seen from the attitude of the Pharisees that it was easier to heal men's bodies than to change their minds.

But Jude could not foresee the trials and failures, the signs and wonders, the disbelief and insults which the future held for him as he was to travel through this land with Christ, teaching and practising His new doctrine of love. Yet, had Jude known that future - its trouble, pain, humiliation, death itself - he would not have faltered. He was entranced with the beauty of Christ's teaching and he was anxious to "go forth and teach all nations." But the road ahead was hard and rocky.

Jude's Training

The days that followed were active ones for Jude. He was launched on his new career. He believed firmly in the Master but he did not always fully comprehend. Jude had long shared the desire for a national liberator, one who would break the Roman chains binding his nation. The specifications of Christ's new law demanded that he abandon his former support of the old Jewish doctrine, the structure on which his forefathers had stood firm for

generations. Christ's contract required that Jude build upon the new untried ground of service. Was it rock or sand? Could he base his life upon it with firm security? What about his beloved nation? It took months of association with the new Teacher before he fully recognized how secure the foundation was, not only for himself and his people, but for other peoples as well.

The new mode of life was not an easy one for Jude, the farmer, nor for his companions, the fishermen and the tax collector. It meant much discipline of mind and body. Jude had to remold the concept of rigid justice taught by his elders into the more flexible concept of love and service,. He had to change the quiet routine of rural life into a strenuous twenty-four-hour day of apostolic activity which demanded the strength to climb mountains, to trudge rugged roads, to sleep in the open, to endure fasting and hunger.

This meant field work and exploration by day, study and contemplation by night, under the supervision of the Principal of the new school. Jude had much work to do, much study to accomplish before he would be graduated, before he would receive his diploma with the injunction from the Master, "as the Father has sent me, I also send you."

Field Work

Jude's field work started immediately when he walked with Christ to the little town of Nairn. On that first trip he saw Christ show His great power and His compassionate heart by raising the young man to life and restoring him to his widowed mother.

Jude was at the banquet with the Master when Mary Magdalene washed His feet with penitent tears. He heard

the consoling words of Christ: "Her sins, many as they are, shall be forgiven her, because she has loved much."

He learned another lesson quickly in the boat on the Lake of Genesareth when a sudden storm came up and he cried out with the others: "Lord save us! We are perishing." He saw Christ stretch out His hand and calm the sea. He stood outside the house of Jairus where the crowd was mourning the death of the little twelve-year-old daughter. He heard people laugh Christ to scorn when He said, "The girl sleeps." Jude saw Him enter the house and say, "Girl, arise!" He carried one of the baskets to gather up the fragments from the feeding of the 5,000 with the few barley loaves and fishes. He learned the Lord's Prayer from Christ's own lips. He heard all the parables: The Unjust Steward, The Lost Sheep, The Prodigal Son; he heard Christ speak about the blindness of the Pharisees, and he was startled by the predictions of the Passion and Resurrection. It was a fruitful training for the time when he would first be called upon to test his qualifications, when he would as a fledgling try his own wings.

Jude's eyes were raised in astonishment many times as he traveled through Galilee, Samaria, and Judea and witnessed the wonders Christ performed. The teaching, the miracles, the progress of the great drama of redemption in which Jude now had a part - all have been recorded in the Gospels by the Evangelists, two of whom, Matthew and John, accompanied Jude on these missions. It is an ever-thrilling, inspired story, familiar to all readers, and it needs no retelling here.

Jude's First Mission

Time was passing quickly and the apostles had much to learn. One day at Capharnaum Christ gave them their first commission - to go to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." Christ knew that Jude and the others were not prepared as yet to preach to the foreigners, the Gentiles, or even to the separated Jews, the Samaritans. This was their first trial, to preach to their own people. To equip them for this mission, He gave them the same power He possessed to cast out unclean spirits and to cure every kind of disease and infirmity.

The Instructions

The apostles were dispatched two by two and they were to deliver the message, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Probably Jude and Simon were partners, the beginning of an apostolate which later would carry them to distant countries. Both heard the filial instructions with apprehension. They were to carry no money, extra clothing, or food. They were not to seek rest in public inns, but were to abide in one private house in each town so as to be available to anyone who wished to hear their message or to have the sick cured. If they met with rebuff in any town or village they were to move on to the next one. They were to take nothing! They were to fear nothing! They were to trust completely in Christ! These were demands that tested the strength and courage of both Jude and Simon. They must possess nothing except poverty, in order to gain souls for Christ; nothing for themselves, everything for Christ! It was a challenge to the first apostles and it was to carry down through the ages to their successors, to Saint Dominic and to Saint Francis when they sent their tunic-clad friars into the same hardened world.

Going forth, Jude preached repentance to men, cast out devils, cured the sick, and worked other miracles in Christ's

name. This was his first practical work for the Savior. He experienced his first thrill and emotion in exercising the power granted to him. He saw happiness reflected in the twisted and deformed bodies he made straight and upright; he realized the great gift of vision which he bestowed on sightless eyes; he drove devils out of tormented souls. Jude knelt on the ground at night in the sanctuary of his room and thanked Christ who had given such gifts to him. Little did he realize that this was a bequeathed power which he would exercise down through the ages for many desperately afflicted and hopelessly unfortunate humans.

Return to School

Flushed with the success of their first mission, Jude and the other apostles returned to Christ bubbling over with excitement and enthusiasm. Jude was quick to remember that they had been sent only to their fellow countrymen, the Jews. He realized that much more schooling was needed before they would be qualified to go among the Gentiles, the Samaritans, and the distant nations. This training was to continue through the public life of Christ; and during the remaining months of close association with Him, Jude was to witness many more astonishing miracles and to absorb many practical lessons of doctrine before he was ordained a priest to go among the unenlightened.

Time was passing rapidly and the climax of Calvary was approaching. The new and disturbing doctrine of Christ was causing much political agitation among the rulers, and religious turmoil among the Pharisees and Sadducees. He still had many lessons to teach the Twelve and great miracles to perform before their faith was stabilized: for example, another multiplication of loaves and fishes to prefigure the changing of bread and wine into His own body and blood. Jude was present at all of these. Daily his concept

of Christ's mission was broadening, and he became steadily more conscious of his part in Christ's plan for the redemption of mankind.

The Last Week

Jude heard the messengers who came to Christ with the news that His friend Lazarus was ill. The apostle wondered why Jesus, instead of going at once to His friend, lingered along the Jordan River for two days and then told them Lazarus was dead. Jude was even more confused when Christ said, "I go that I may wake him from sleep." When they arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had been in the grave four days. Jude helped roll the stone back so that Christ might call Lazarus forth!

This was the very summit of Christ's miracles, the introduction, as it were, to His death and the pledge of His Resurrection. So while those at the tomb believed, those in high places plotted.

Christ must go on to Jerusalem so that He might be crucified. But before that came to pass there was one joyful note, a demonstration of affection by the people themselves on Palm Sunday when they strewed palms in His path and cried: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The Last Supper

Christ and the Twelve gathered in the Upper Chamber. As we look back on that scene from our distant view, it is easy to see that the apostles did not grasp the full significance of that supper - the material meal for the human body and the divine food for the immortal soul. Their minds were filled with dreams and ambitions for a kingdom in this world.

Despite the solemnity of the occasion they were wrangling among themselves about their places at the table; but Christ gave them a lesson in humility by washing their feet, and he administered a stinging rebuke to their manners by commanding: "Let him who is greatest among you become as the youngest, and he who is the chief as the servant." Where was Jude during all this discussion?

Jude gave evidence of his great humility by seeking the lowest place. Famous artists in their paintings seem to recognize this humility, for they place Jude among the lowest at the table. He is not quoted by any of the Evangelists as taking part in the rivalry for place, but after all were seated and Christ began His discourse, it is evident that Jude was listening intently to Christ's words, for then he asked an important question to which Christ replied.

The supper was nearly finished when Christ instituted the Blessed Sacrament and gave the apostles of His own body and blood. Jude, on account of his place at the table, was one of the last to receive the body and blood from Christ's own hands. He bowed his head reverently when Christ consecrated him a priest and gave him the power to change bread into His body and wine into His blood with the simple words, "Do this in commemoration of Me!" Jude had now received his full commission. He was a "priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech." His road of service stretched out ahead of him into the distant lands, but there remained the last instructions from the Master.

Final Admonitions

Christ was fully aware of the sadness that would fall upon the apostles after His departure by the way of the cross. He knew of the fear that would seize them, and He wanted them to know that they would all be reunited in His Father's

house; that He and the Father are one; that the Advocate, the Spirit of Truth, was to come to abide with them and make them understand all things. If the apostles loved Him they would keep His commandments and they would have no fears.

But all this was hard for them to understand. They interrupted Him with questions. Thomas was puzzled, he wanted to know where Christ was going; Philip did not comprehend; he asked, "Lord, show us the Father." Christ digressed from His formal speech to reassure them. He told them that every person who loves Him will also be loved by the Father, "And I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

Jude's Question

Jude, the newly ordained, who was usually the silent one, the thinker, comprehended Christ's meaning and he was thrilled by the thought of union with Christ, but in his generosity he wanted to include all men in this revelation. So Jude leaned forward from his self-appointed place at the foot of the table and respectfully expressed his wish in the form of a question, "Lord, how is it that Thou art about to manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world?" Saint John tells us (14:23), "And Jesus answered and said to him. . . ." Looking at Jude, Jesus says, in effect, "The manifestation will be to you, and with the coming of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, through you to the world!" The other apostles probably did not fully comprehend the meaning of Christ's answer, but the light in Jude's eye showed that he understood.

This question must have been discussed for some time among the early Fathers, for Saint Cyril (315-386) has made significant comments about it. There are several Saint Cyrils, but this one was Bishop of Jerusalem and a successor to

Jude's own brother, James. He lived in the very city where this question was asked and answered, so he must have heard subsequent comments about it. Saint Cyril is today a Doctor of the Church, and his words carry weight. He says:

Jude is indeed worthy of admiration; for his desire is that the glory of Christ should shine forth as the sun does on the material world. His zeal for the salvation of souls was not yet satisfied, although he was among the chosen few to whom the Savior of men had revealed Himself. The burning charity which filled Saint Jude's heart toward his fellow creatures made him ardently desire that the knowledge and love of his divine Master should be extended to everyone.

There being no more questions, Christ closed this part of His discourse at the Last Supper with the words, "Arise, let us go from here." The first Communion was over, the thanksgiving was made. Jude, who had sat down to that table a seminarian, arose a priest. Christ had manifested Himself to him. After the coming of the Advocate, it would be Jude's turn to manifest Christ to the world.

The Answer to the King

Jude was now to become the bond between Christ and the world, and specifically between Christ and King Abgar. Christ has given His answer to Jude's famous question. He would send the Advocate on Pentecost Sunday to take up His residence in the new Church and in the hearts of men. Our question concerning Jude's identity has been answered, and soon Jude will bring in person to King Abgar the answer to the king's question:

"Who is this Jude?"

Preparation and Departure

After the Resurrection

The ensuing days were bewildering ones for Jude. He was torn with many conflicting emotions, for startling events followed in rapid order: the crucifixion, the burial, the resurrection. Then came Christ's appearance to Jude and the other apostles at the table. His message: "Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you shall forgive. . . ." Then the Ascension, followed by the - sense of loneliness, helplessness! The Master is gone! Now Jude, the pupil, must assume his responsibility; but first there is the prayerful preparation for the active work.



The First Novena

Jude spent the time between Ascension Thursday and Pentecost Sunday in community prayer with the other apostles; Mary, the Mother of God; his own mother, Mary of Cleophas; and the other holy women. Then on Sunday morning, with a rush of wind and parted tongues of fire, Jude received the plentitude of the Holy Ghost and the gift of languages for his missionary work. Thereafter, though Jude spoke only his native language, he was understood by all listeners in all the countries he visited and he could comprehend their speech. There would be no confusion of tongues in his preaching.

Jude's First Sermon

On Pentecost Sunday, Jude delivered his first sermon to the people of many nations who were in Jerusalem at that time. Among them were, as the Bible relates, "Parthians, Medes and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia." Later, Jude

would preach to all these people in their own countries and again they would understand him in their own tongues. The Acts of the Apostles has not preserved Jude's sermon for us, as it has preserved Peter's words on that day, but we know that Jude spoke with the same fire and conviction and that many of the 3,000 converts to the new Church on that early morning were the first fruits of Jude's apostolate.

Organizational Work

Jude did not start at once on his special assignment to King Abgar in Mesopotamia, for there were official duties requiring his presence in Jerusalem. The first important matter for the apostles was the selection of a new member to replace Iscariot, the one who had defaulted. The choice ultimately fell on Matthias, who henceforth was numbered among the Twelve. They had to apportion the lands of the Gentiles for their particular missionary work; Jude, of course, already had his territory assigned by Christ. There were other appointments to be made, organizational and executive tasks which demanded attention.

Jude's Departure

There was no formality about Jude's departure, for he had little to pack for his journey. He had been trained in the school of Christ to travel light.

On his first mission to the lost sheep of Israel, Christ had commanded, "Take nothing for your journey, except a staff. . .no wallet, no bread, no money."

This time it was easier for Jude to travel unencumbered, for he was equipped with a confidence and knowledge that Christ was "the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

He recalled that this was Christ's reply to Thomas' question at the Last Supper when Thomas asked, "How can we know the way?"

Now Jude understood his Master's words more fully and he also comprehended in a new sense Christ's answer to his own question about how Christ would manifest Himself to the world.

He knew now that Christ was manifesting Himself to the world through him by this first journey to strangers.

When Jude left our Blessed Lady, his mother, and the apostles in Jerusalem, he passed over the familiar road into Galilee, where he visited with his relatives for the last time - a "homecoming" and a "farewell." Then he moved on to Capharnaum, the scene of so many vivid memories, and then out of his own country into Syria, where he announced the Risen Christ to the people at every stop.

He knew that haste was not required in reaching Edessa. His official orders were to cure King Abgar, but there was no imminent danger to the king's health. Hence, he could spread the gospel and work miracles in Syria and Lebanon, as he approached Mesopotamia and the king's palace.

In Syria and Lebanon

The first large city on his itinerary was Damascus, an important commercial center on the main highway from Palestine. Syrian merchants had brought home news of the recent events in Jerusalem. Some of them had been in that city when Peter, Jude, and the other apostles had preached on Pentecost Sunday, and they had heard of the Resurrection. Jude by his presence and his preaching in their own city confirmed the report that Christ was truly risen and that the Scriptures had been fulfilled. The people were filled

with awe and reverence at his words, his curing of their sick, and his wonderful miracles. Truly, Jude was preaching the kingdom of God to these willing listeners.

Jude moved on to Beirut, a coastal town of Lebanon on the Mediterranean, where he continued his preaching and the working of miracles. Even to this day his name is held in reverence in that city and some unsubstantiated claims have been made that he finally suffered martyrdom here. This, at least, indicates the traditional deference for his presence in the ancient city.

When Jude left the shoreline, he went north in Syria where he made his last stop at the inland town of Aleppo. He delivered the same message of hope to its people, but he could not stay long, for the king's Captain Cumra was waiting to escort him to Edessa.

In Edessa

The Escort

While Jude was preaching in Lebanon and Syria, news of his approach had filtered into Mesopotamia. Captain Cumra's intelligence agents had carried the information to him from beyond the border. He had in turn relayed it to Hannan, King Abgar's secretary. The king sent for Cumra.

"Captain, I am overjoyed. We are about to receive the ambassador of the Savior, this Jude, for whom, as you know, I have long waited. All courtesy must be shown him and his high rank. Since you have met him before, you will again be my official representative."

Cumra assured the king of his pleasure, but he grew pensive. Observing his expression the king asked, "What

troubles you, Captain?"

The captain's reply was tactful.

"I am wondering, Your Majesty, about the proper reception for this representative. When I saw Christ and His follower, Jude, they did not affect any display or haughtiness. I fear he will not wish any elaborate ceremonies or court ritual and I know you would not wish to embarrass him."

"How right you are, my Captain," graciously agreed the king. "See him first at our border or beyond and greet him for me. He will understand why I am unable to meet him myself. Learn if he has a retinue and if so how many and their rank. Ascertain his wishes and send a courier to me at once with your message."

Then as an afterthought, the king added, "Perhaps you yourself should meet him without uniform, as you did before."

The king had much to learn of the simplicity of the kingdom of God ! Jude was not coming to receive honors. Jude was on his way to give, to manifest Christ to the king and his people, to fulfill a promise made by Christ, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

The Arrival

Now the king anxiously awaited Jude's appearance. Relays of messengers had kept him informed of Jude's approach and his desire for a private reception. The king dismissed all the members of his court circle with the exception of his secretary and his personal attendants. All withdrew to the courtyard, for they realized that some important event was about to occur. They had noted Captain Cumra's absence

and there was speculation about it: Was the king worse? Had the captain gone for some special physician?

Next they saw the captain without his military uniform coming toward the palace with a plainly clad stranger carrying a staff. They watched the pair go directly to the king's chambers.

There Jude stood and faced the reclining king - the king surrounded by regal splendor; the apostle in his simple tunic, yet clothed with the grace of God and His delegated power.

Jude spoke first, the simple greeting of the Master after His Resurrection:

"Peace be to you. The Lord has sent me."

The "king bowed his head in grateful acknowledgment.

"Peace be to you also," he answered. "I have long awaited this meeting. I have cherished the likeness of your Master these many days. I have kept it near me always." The king took the cloth and handed it to Jude who received it graciously. Then the king added prayerfully, "Now, may your Lord and Savior grant my petition and make me clean!"

Even as he spoke Jude stepped closer to his couch, carrying the cloth with the image of Christ's face. Stretching forth his hand, as Christ had done so many times, he said, "The Lord wills it so. Thy faith has made thee whole," and touching the monarch's tortured body, he said, "Be thou made clean!"

Instantly the leprosy dropped from the king as a soiled robe is shaken off, and he rose from his couch a cleansed man.

Falling on his knees before Jude, the king kissed his worn sandal. Tears of joy streamed from his eyes as he said, "Blessed be thy Savior, now and forever in my whole kingdom!"

The small group of onlookers was stunned. They had seen with their own eyes an incredible happening, something beyond all practical experience - an incurable disease banished by a word and a touch!

The captain was the first to regain his composure. He clapped his hands and ordered the attendants to clothe the king in regal garb so that he could appear on the balcony; the voices of those in the courtyard revealed their impatience at being excluded from the mysterious happenings in the palace. The captain, too, quickly donned military dress.

It was a dramatic moment when the three appeared on the balcony - the captain in his military attire, the king now erect and majestic in his regal robes, and Jude in his humble, faded tunic. An awed hush fell over the court as they looked at their king.

They marveled to see him restored to physical health and strength, and turned their eyes to the humble man on his right, surmising that he must in some way be associated with this wonder. An impulsive cheer rocked the courtyard as the full force of the miracle dawned on them.

The King Speaks

Raising his hand, the king obtained silence. From the balcony he looked down upon his people with affection; his voice resounded in the stillness:

"My people," he said, in a voice filled with emotion, "behold your king miraculously restored to health by this apostle, Jude, through the power of Jesus Christ, whom the Jews so recently crucified in Jerusalem because He said He was the Son of God." After a pause for his excited people to realize the full significance of this message, he added: "Truly, I say to you He is the Son of God and this day I have knelt before His apostle, Jude, and I, a king, have humbly acknowledged His greater kingship and His eternal kingdom."

The entire court again broke into cheers. Again the king waved for silence.

"My beloved people," he announced, "there is much cause for rejoicing. Let heralds be sent immediately throughout my kingdom to announce the good news to all the people. Let there be general rejoicing. I declare a three-day holiday for the kingdom, with merriment and celebration for all. On the third day, let my court assemble in the palace for a banquet of thanksgiving and to hear the apostle, Jude, tell us of his great God, so that you, too, may believe in Him."

A pandemonium of happiness seized the people as they swiftly scattered to spread the exciting news and to rejoice in the holidays. Meanwhile, Jude quietly retired into the palace with the king and the captain. It was the greatest day in the history of Edessa. In commemoration of it and of Jude's miraculous part in it, he has been represented by artists and sculptors throughout the centuries as carrying an image of Christ in his hand.

Saint Jude's Travels

Saint Jude received the people of Edessa into the true Church without encountering any major difficulties. With the good will and favorable attitude of the miraculously cured

king, the people readily followed his example. It was much the same as when Christ cured the royal official's son of whom Saint John tells us: "And he himself believed, and his whole household." (4:53) It will be recalled that King Abgar had invited Christ to share his kingdom. That invitation was now extended to Jude, but the apostle graciously accepted only part of the generous offer. He made the city his headquarters. However, he could not, according to Christ's instructions, take up his residence in the palace. He accepted humble quarters in the city with a man named Tobias. To this place the poorest in the kingdom felt free to come, and the sick and the afflicted solicited his help without embarrassment or humiliation. From Tobias' home, Jude obeyed Christ's command to "cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils."

Jude traveled throughout the territory establishing the kingdom of God on earth, exercising the wonderful powers given to him by healing men's bodies and their souls. This traveling was not easy, for the subjects of King Abgar were nomadic tribes of Arabic people who were caught in the struggle for territory between powerful states. Jude labored among these scattered people for many years, and the results of his zeal and his executive ability are written in the subsequent history of Mesopotamia and in the catalogue of saints, for a rich harvest resulted from the seeds of Christianity planted by Jude.

Confusion of Names

Years later, our apostle, Jude, was to be succeeded in Edessa by another Thaddeus, a later disciple. At that time Abgar IX, also a Christian king, was the ruler. The two disciples and the two Abgars have become somewhat confused in the historical record that has endured. The end of the little kingdom and of the reigns of the Abgars came in the year

216 when the infamous Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, nicknamed Caracalla, ravaged Edessa and the surrounding country. It never again regained its independence, but it never lost its love and affection for Jude who brought the faith to its lands.

To Other Lands

Meanwhile, Jude was continuing his great apostolate and carrying the message of Christ to other peoples.

We devoutly wish that he had left us a legacy of letters and that he had charted his apostolic journeys, as Saint Paul did in his Epistles. We would fervently treasure such a diary of his missionary activities, of the people he converted, of the obstacles he overcame, and of the miracles he worked, but there is no chronicle of his travels. However, we know that the task that confronted Jude was a difficult one, for it had many ethnological problems of race and language, of origins and customs. For instance, Mesopotamia, now part of Turkey, had occupied a key position on the world's crossroads since the dawn of history. Here all the ancient people met and fought for political and religious supremacy. This was the arena in which Jude's activities were to be displayed.

Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia is mentioned many times in Genesis, the first book of the Bible. Abraham's son, Isaac, married Rebecca who came from there, and Isaac in turn sent his own son, Jacob, to that country for his wife. Later, this land saw the flowering of the Greeks and the Romans before it was divided into many small states such as Bithynia, Pontus, Lydia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, and others. Then in Jude's time it witnessed the early development of Christianity.

Jude mapped his crusade, inspired by the Holy Ghost. He left Edessa and traveled north into Bithynia and Pontus, both of which are in the northeast part of the country, with seaports on the Black Sea. It seems that this section was especially reserved for Jude. Paul, when he was nearby, was forbidden by the Holy Ghost to enter or speak in Bithynia (Acts 16:7). Jude entered the country without molestation although Nero's troops were there.

Jude must have planted in fertile soil, for Saint Basil the Great (330-379) tells in one of his letters that he made a spiritual retreat in Pontus and that many monasteries were there.

Into Strange Countries

Jude's next journey was into Armenia, a mountainous country in Western Asia, on the Black Sea, containing the "Holy Mount," Ararat, where Noah's ark rested after the flood. When Jude entered Armenia, it was a pagan country whose people worshiped strange gods. There he planted the seed of Christianity which later was to be harvested by Saint Gregory the Illuminator. There, too, Saint Basil the Great, one of the towering figures in Church history, was to try valiantly to effect unity among a people divided by schisms and heresies.

Jude must have realized that these new converts were like children. They could not grasp the full beauty and complete doctrine of the newly established Catholic religion. It would take time and growth for them to develop, and he would have to exercise patience. Paul experienced the same difficulties in making the Corinthians in Greece understand. He had to write to them, "When I was a child I thought as a

child, I spoke as a child. But when I became a man I put away the things of a child." (I Corinthians 13:11)

Armenia has written a tragic page in the records of nations. It has been disrupted by doctrinal dissensions and torn by political wars until today the Catholics are few. Politically it has ceased to exist, for it has been divided among Turkey, Persia, and Russia. These three nations account for about half of the present population; many native Armenians, who still enjoy the reputation of being shrewd and capable commercially, are now scattered in other lands. Yet the name of Jude Thaddeus is still held in great reverence in that territory.

Russia

There is substantial evidence that Jude traveled at least into the southern part of what is now Russia. The large city of Tiflis is only about 150 miles north of Mount Ararat. It is the capital city of Georgia and it has been destroyed and rebuilt many times through the centuries. From Tiflis it is less than 300 miles to the key city of Baku on the Caspian Sea, now an important oil-producing center for the Russians. The high Caucasus Mountains do not have to be crossed to reach these towns from the Armenian border. The evidence of Jude's presence in Tiflis and Baku comes from ancient writings and from the persistent and constant devotion to him in that territory even to this day; indeed, it seems reasonable to assume that his zeal would have forced him to make the comparatively short journey into Russia. And there may be other significant reasons for the interest of our Lady and Saint Jude in this unfortunate country, especially in our own times.

History in these days may be weaving a new pattern. For instance, it was at Tiflis that Stalin studied theology and it

was in this town that he was dismissed from the seminary and entered the revolutionary movement. It was in Baku that he began his plotting, after his escape from prison. At the time of the first revolution in Russia, our Lady appeared in Fatima (1917) to show, by a miraculous vision to three children, her continued interest in Russia. When Stalin came into full power, after the death of Lenin, devotion to Saint Jude entered into a new phase - the inauguration of public devotion to him in our own country. This new expression of fidelity supplemented the popular private devotion to him which was already widespread.

Continued Interest

Are the Blessed Mother and her nephew, Saint Jude, still concerned about the Russian people? The eloquent answer will be found in the world-wide devotions to Our Lady of Fatima, in the increasing number of public shrines to Saint Jude, and in the gigantic chorus of prayer that ascends heavenward for the Russian people. Yearly, thousands of pilgrims travel to Portugal to pray for these stricken people, and Saturday devotions, as requested by our Lady, are now offered throughout our country where the petition is made to her:

Our Lady of Fatima
Obtain peace for the world.

In the numerous public shrines of Saint Jude and through the multitude of novenas made in his honor the same plea rises to the throne of God:

Saint Jude, pray for us
That our times may be peaceful.

Return to Edessa

Message from Simon

Jude returned to his headquarters in Edessa. The ground had been broken in Russia and the grain planted. It was as Christ said when He went to Jerusalem for the last time, "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone" (John 12:24-25). Jude had planted the grain in Russia and now on his return journey through Armenia he had to harrow the soil where he had previously planted.

News of Jude's homecoming to Edessa had been widely rumored before his arrival, and the populace was prepared to greet him with manifest affection. He found many changes. Tobias had died a Christian death, but the humble quarters of Jude had not been disturbed. Captain Cumra was aging and had been given an honorary post at the palace. The king himself was conscious that his earthly reign was nearly completed and his son, Prince Abgar, had been prepared for his future duties. The people themselves seemed unchanged and greeted Jude with the same delight they displayed when they first took him to their hearts.

Simon's Message

There was a message awaiting Jude - a letter from the Apostle Simon which had been received during Jude's absence. Simon was working at that time in Persia, or Iran, as it is called today. He had encountered difficulties with the Zoroastrian magicians who wielded a powerful influence over the Parthian rulers and a semi-religious control over the people. The leaders had a superstitious fear of the sorcerers and their incantations. The people, too, in their ignorance of the supernatural, were fearful of the magicians, who, by their seeming influence over the idols, were treated seriously and appealed to solemnly for the interpretation of signs or omens.

Jude's Reply

Jude could not go to the aid of Simon at once, for as he explained to Simon he had certain imperative work to do in Edessa and the surrounding country. When he was able to leave his affairs in the hands of competent assistants he would go to Persia. In the meanwhile, if Simon pleased, would he send him a letter outlining the main points of the critical situation so that he, Jude, could prepare himself accordingly? Simon wrote to him from the campsite of General Baradac, chief of the king's army which was preparing to withstand an invasion from India. Simon mentioned as the principal source of his trouble the two evil magicians, Zaroës and Arphaxat.

An Explanation

We must pause here for an interpolation so as to avoid confusion in the mind of the reader. Various translators, of the original records have spelled the name of the general in different ways, for example, Varadac, Baradac, Varadach, etc., and there are many spellings for the names of the two magicians. This is not due to a diversity of persons, for all translators agree on the individuals, but it is caused by the difficulties encountered in changing proper names from the original language into English.

Since all three men played important roles in the lives of the two apostles, it is well to state here that we are following the spelling used in the book entitled *The Golden Legend*, by Blessed James of Voragine (1228-1298), a Dominican friar who became Archbishop of Genoa.

Historical Data

Blessed James based his writings, as he tells us himself, on the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea in

Palestine (260-341), who is called the "Father of Church History." Eusebius borrowed from Abdias of Babylon, said to have been one of the 72 disciples of Christ and the first Bishop of Babylon, consecrated by Saints Jude and Simon. Abdias was not an inspired biblical writer, but his early historical records have been widely accepted and quoted by illustrious Church dignitaries - for instance, Saint Ephrem the Deacon, who died in Edessa in 373; Saint John Damascene (676-758) - and by the early ecclesiastical writers Nicephorus, the historian, and Scholasticus Evagrius.

Jude and Simon

Jude and Simon were to encounter in Persia what Paul and Barnabas had to contend with at Paphos on the island of Cyprus - magicians full of deceit (Acts 13:6-10). General Baradac was a prudent man. He was prepared for the expected invasion of an army from India, but he was inwardly troubled; he had consulted the idols and he had not obtained favorable signs. There were two magicians Zaroos and Arphaxat in his camp who had been driven out of Ethiopia by Matthew. In desperation, the general enlisted their services. The magicians failed to secure favorable responses from the idols and, recalling their experience with Matthew, they blamed this upon the presence of the apostles in the vicinity of the camp.

The general ordered that Jude and Simon be brought before him. This was the very opportunity the apostles were seeking in order to demonstrate the power of God over evil forces. They stood before Baradac, not as he had expected to see them, cringing and fawning prisoners, but as honorable and dignified men. He was impressed immediately. He quickly changed his planned policy of

intimidation and asked them respectfully, "Who are you, what is your race, and why are you here?"

Jude became the spokesman. He replied with the same clarity and brevity:

"We are servants of Christ. Our race is Hebrew. We are here for your salvation."

The general was startled at this succinct and intelligent reply. He wished to probe further into the motivation of these two men who aroused his keen interest, especially by the remark about salvation. But that must wait.

"As you know, I am about to start a battle for our king and our country," said Baradac. "I plan to outmaneuver the enemy by attacking him first instead of letting him take the offensive. Because I have waited in vain for propitious signs from the gods, I am giving the command to march. If you are here when I return I shall talk further with you."

This was Jude's opportunity. He replied quickly, "If you knew our Master better, you would realize that He can give you victory or dispose your enemy to beg for peace without a battle!"

The general was struck by this bold statement. He said rather brusquely, "You seem very confident and sure of yourself. Is this a challenge? Do you claim your God has more power than our gods and our seers? If you do, then predict here and now the outcome of this battle! Will we defeat the enemy? Yes, or no? Answer!"

The Challenge

Jude and Simon were not perturbed for they were sure of God's power. They answered softly and respectfully, Jude

again doing the talking.

"We can give you a definite and a positive answer immediately, but, General, we want to open your eyes to these two deceivers, for that is what they are. Please ask them the question: 'Will we win?' and insist that they give you a clear and a positive reply, 'Yes' or 'No.' Then when they have answered, if they dare do so without evasion, we will prove they are false by giving you the truth! Command them, General, and your ears will be astonished and your eyes will be opened!"

"It is a fair challenge, Hebrews." Then turning to the soothsayers he said, "I command you to make your prediction. Will we win? Yes or no!"

It was a dramatic moment. The entire staff of officers and their orderlies were tense as the two conjurers whispered to each other. Finally they spoke in a halting and hesitant manner.

"The gods tell us that it will be fierce war, long and bitter. The people will flee before the enemy. More than this the gods will not tell us. This is their final word."

The general and the soldiers were appalled at this frightful prediction. They were speechless, but Jude and Simon broke into laughter.

The general sarcastically asked, "You laugh at death? Are you so cruel that you enjoy the death of my soldiers?"

"Oh, General," Jude said, "we laugh only at the foolish pretenders who try to deceive you. We are both men of peace and we bring the peace of our Christ. This is our true prophecy: Tomorrow at the third hour of the day, truce officers from the enemy will arrive seeking peace. There will

be no battle and no slaughter of your soldiers; no fleeing of the people from the enemy. This is told us by our Master and King, Jesus Christ."

The general and his officers heaved sighs of relief, but the magicians were frightened by this bold prediction. Trying to save face they forced a laugh to their lips.

"These strangers who say they are Hebrews may well be from the enemy, seeking to lull you into a false security, so that the soldiers from India may overcome you by a surprise attack. Do not trust the foreigners." The magicians ignored the fact that they too were aliens.

This point was quickly picked up by Jude and he made his clinching reply:

"These two men are likewise strangers to your land. We do not tell you, General, that your country will endure a long and costly war. We ask you to wait only until tomorrow morning, keeping your soldiers alert in the meantime."

The general's decision was prompt and certain.

"Officers," he commanded, "place all these men under guard in separate cells. We will await the morning and then we will know who speaks the truth. We shall see whose god is true! When morning comes the false interpreters shall be executed. Proceed!"

But Jude and Simon in their cells were not alarmed. They rejoiced in the Holy Ghost and "glorified God that gave such power to men."

The Victory

Next morning as the hour drew near, the general had the apostles and the magicians brought to headquarters under guard. There they awaited the final test - would the truce force come from India? Jude and Simon were calm and confident, Zaroos and Arphaxat were noticeably excited and nervous. They knew that time was running out. A sentry announced the hour - it was the deadline set by the apostles. A blare of trumpets sounded in the camp. The tricksters winced and paled as sentinels from the outpost entered and saluted. At a recognition from the general they reported:

"Commander, unarmed envoys from India are seeking audience and bearing peace offerings!"

"Admit them," ordered the general, "and bring them here to my headquarters." Then turning to his officer of the day he commanded, "Take these four men away under guard until I order them back. Make ready to receive the envoys. Summon my staff officers."

Justice vs. Mercy

After the satisfactory completion of the peace parley without the loss of life, the general summoned Jude and Simon and the two discredited magicians. He looked at the sorcerers in contempt.

Then he said courteously to the apostles, "Your God has predicted truly. Later I wish to learn more of Him and this salvation of which you spoke. But first the two pretenders must pay the penalty of their knavery. Guards, throw them into the fire!"

But the apostles pleaded with him.

"General, spare them; we have not come to destroy the living, but to give more abundant life to those who will accept our God."

The general and all his soldiers wondered greatly that the good men would plead for the lives of the evil ones. But he granted their wish by ordering the magicians expelled in disgrace from Persia while he took the apostles to his king for a complete person-to-person report of the eventful happenings of that morning.

This was the beginning of a sequence of rich apostolic work in that pagan country. But Jude and Simon had not seen the last of their satanic enemies. They were to meet again in another country with tragic results.

How many years the two apostles labored among these people has never been determined accurately. History is vague on this point, but one author, Fabricius, giving an earlier source, states it was 13 years.

This does not necessarily mean successive years and does not preclude the possibility that Jude may have made several visits to Edessa, Armenia, and other places. We have fairly well substantiated evidence that Simon labored in India, and other less reliable information places him in China.

It seems reasonable to assume that after the singular and spectacular demonstration of the power of God given to the Persians, the two apostles must have remained in that country long enough to establish the new Church on a firm foundation - one on which their successors could safely build.

Regarding the activities of Jude and Simon, there are many fanciful stories that have gained strength and stature as

they have been fed by centuries of folklore and hero-worship. They cover the gamut of human achievements and superhuman performances. We shall reluctantly forego them, not because they may be "worthless things enclosed in jeweled cases," but because "there is nothing so powerful as truth - and often nothing so strange." This strange truth, which God was to work through Jude and Simon, took the apostles to the ancient country of Babylonia- now Iraq - the fantastic land of Ali Baba and the Arabian Nights.

Babylonia and Idols

When the two wicked magicians were ordered out of Persia, they immediately sought refuge to the west, in Babylonia. This was the fertile delta between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. It was the site of the ancient city of Babylon, whose ruins are not far from the modern tourist stop called Hilla. Nearby is Baghdad, the present capital of Iraq.

Here the two magicians took up their residence and continued their weird rituals before the pagan idols.

Meanwhile, Jude and Simon traveled into this country and there performed their miracles and preached the true faith to the people, many of whom believed and were baptized. Among the miracles told of them are the driving out of devils and the saving of a community from the ravages of wild animals. However, their most publicized work in Babylonia was their conflict with the idols. In some cases, merely by the Sign of the Cross made over the idols, the images were shattered and the impostors exposed.

Samir and Its Idols

The apostles' fame spread throughout the land and greatly troubled the two magicians who had taken refuge in a town

called Samir. The two sorcerers, Zaroos and Arphaxat, had ingratiated themselves with the pagan clergy in Samir and had impressed them with their craftiness and chicanery. Samir, with a temple that had as many as 70 priests serving the idols, must have been a city of some size.

In advance of the apostles' arrival, the magicians had agitated the leaders and the attendants against Simon and Jude, so that the people, taking their cue from the authorities, received Christ's followers with hostility.

Old Enemies

When Jude attempted to speak to the high priest, the magicians led such an uproar that the people frenziedly joined in the tumult and roughly laid hands on the apostles. Jude and Simon recognized the ringleaders as their former antagonists, the magicians. The mob dragged the apostles to the center of the temple and placed them before the idols.

The sorcerers had a crafty plan. If Jude and Simon refused to kneel in worship before the idols, the magicians would incite the crazed people to murder them. In either case, the evil influence that Zaroos and Arphaxat exerted over the people would be restored. It was, they thought, a dilemma from which there was no escape for the apostles.

As Jude and Simon stood unflinching and unafraid before the high priest, the gloating magicians urged him to put them to the test. Thus incited, he signaled for silence. The crowd became quiet and listened to the high priest's words:

"The gods have spoken and their command shall be obeyed. They have told our soothsayers that these two men from Jerusalem must either offer sacrifice to the gods or suffer death at your hands. Listen to their answer to our gods!"

Addressing the apostles, he said, "Will you kneel and adore?"

All remained in breathless silence awaiting the answer. Jude became the spokesman. In a clear firm voice that carried to the edge of the throng he spoke.

"We adore and obey the one and only true God, who said, 'Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me!' Through His name and by His power we command these idols to burst asunder!"

The Power of God

In a flash of light from heaven the images split apart, and with a thunderous rumble they toppled to the ground. A cloud of dust mushroomed into the air. The pagan priest, the magicians, and the people were stunned at the power of the real God.

The magicians were the first to recover their composure. They shouted at the people to kill the apostles. But Jude and Simon were not abashed. They remembered another time when the rabbis and the people wished to throw Christ off the hill at Nazareth. As He did then, they did now - they walked majestically through the crowd and no man was able to lay a hand on them. As they went their way, Jude recalled Christ's admonition when He first sent him out on his apostolate, "Whoever does not receive you or listen to your words - go forth outside that town and shake the dust from your feet" (Matthew 10:14).

The Martyrdom

Jude and Simon walked boldly out of Samir. The enraged people were frozen in amazement. They could not

understand this courage. At the outskirts of the city, the apostles paused in silent reflection over the events of the day. They bowed their heads in thanksgiving to God who had given such power them. But now a parting of the ways had come.

It was with deep understanding and affection that they separated. Simon started west through the Syrian desert to new fields in strange lands where he eventually was martyred. We leave him at this crossroads, to follow Jude as he makes his way north toward his home town of Edessa; a journey started in this life but completed in another; a long journey that ended in eternity.

Walking into Eternity

The apostolate of Jude was nearly ended, his earthly career drawing to a sudden close. He was not acutely aware of this, but he had lived with death for so long a time that it held no fears for him. Christ had warned the Twelve before His own death on the cross, "They will expel you from the synagogues. Yes, the hour is coming that whosoever kills you will think he does a service to God." (John 16:2)

While these thoughts filled Jude's mind as he came nearer to Edessa, his enemies were active. The day after the destruction of the idols the stunned people began to recover their poise. Their shame and humiliation slowly turned to rage and hate. The priests and magicians were quick to capitalize on these emotions. They stirred the crowd to concerted action; these two Jews must die!

A picked group was selected and charged with following and apprehending the apostles. They started swiftly. The intended victims had over a twelve-hour start; the object was to overtake them before they reached the border. The

Samirites did not relish any complications with a neighboring country friendly to the apostles. When they reached the crossroads where the apostles had separated, one group, anticipating that Jude would travel toward Edessa, followed that route. The other posse headed toward Persia and lost its intended victim. The first party made a forced march, and its members increased their rate of travel as they approached the border at dusk on the following day. Then in the distance the advance guard sighted Jude. He was eating his evening meal and preparing for the night.

A briefing of the forces was held by the leader. They would wait until Jude was asleep. Then they would surround and attack him before he could invoke the aid of his powerful God. They would carry only clubs as weapons, to approach without noise. The work was to be done quickly, and the slayers were to disperse and find the way home as best they could.

Darkness fell. Jude slept. Stealthily the murderers surrounded the little valley where he lay. They were moving silently close to him when an overanxious bludgeoner stepped on a loose twig. There was a sharp report. With no further need for caution, the killers converged upon the awakened Jude and hammered death-dealing blows on his head and body. With a single gasp and a muffled prayer, his soul winged its way to heaven - eternal headquarters for the rain of graces he showers down on his friends in this vale of tears and troubles. The Apostle Jude is now Saint Jude Thaddeus, represented in paintings and statues with the picture of Christ in one hand, from King Abgar's day, and with a club in the other, the weapon of his death.

Saint Jude now belongs to the ages. But he continues to operate in the present from his place in the golden galaxy of saints. He is no longer the "forgotten saint," but the Patron

of Hopeless Cases; one who lives in the hearts and prayers of millions - his grateful friends and his imploring clients who constantly call on him:

"Blessed Apostle, with confidence we invoke thee!
Saint Jude, help of the hopeless, aid us in our distress!"

The Relics of Saint Jude

Early History

After the martyrdom of Saint Jude, written history seems to have ended his record without an obituary, as though to avoid something shameful. When he yielded up his spirit, his brutal assassins walked away from the shattered and broken body as though they longed to take flight from the sickening memory of their savage deed. When Jude's faithful friends, the men from Edessa, found his body they tenderly and reverently gave it a fitting burial. They regarded his hidden grave in Mesopotamia as a temporary shelter for his honored relics, for they felt his permanent interment would be in Rome with most of the other apostles who had died for Christ.

Present Location in Rome

For many centuries all the bodily remains of Saints Jude and Simon, except the arm bones, have rested in Saint Peter's Basilica. When the present Basilica was in process of construction, in 1605, Pope Paul V had the relics transferred to a new altar dedicated to the two saints. This altar is the central one of three in the left transept. There, according to all human expectations, they will remain to be venerated for many generations to come. The particular place chosen for their remains marks the spot where the cross stood upon which Saint Peter was crucified with his head down.

Relics in the United States

The forearm of Saint Jude, mentioned above, is now the precious possession of Saint Jude Thaddeus Shrine, Chicago. It was presented to the Shrine by the Very Reverend Raphael Tavano, O.P., Provincial of Saint Peter Martyr Province of the Dominican Order, Turin, Italy. The purpose of Father Tavano in bequeathing this unusual relic to his Dominican brethren in the United States was his desire that it be "where devotion to Saint Jude flourishes." It was an appropriate selection, for public devotions to Saint Jude have been held daily at this Shrine for over twenty-five years.

Before its transfer to the United States, the forearm had been in the possession of the Italian Dominicans for several centuries. Catholic Armenians, fleeing persecution in their own country, brought the relic to Turkey where it was preserved in the Holy Rosary Church in Smyrna. Later it was removed to Italy for more secure protection.

Its Repository

The relic, now in two pieces, is contained in a silver casting of a life-sized forearm which is mounted on a metal base and is complete with a partially opened hand. The forefinger and thumb of the hand are extended as in a benediction. The silver form contains a sealed glass section through which the relic may be viewed. The metal of the case clearly demonstrates its antiquity. Silversmiths agree on its ancient quality and design. The treasured relic is the object of much devotion from the clients of Saint Jude. It is exposed for veneration on the altar of Saint Jude at the close of public novenas which are held five times a year; at such times it is constantly attended by two guards.

Devotion to Saint Jude

Early Devotions

The early Christians who were converted by Saint Jude in Asia Minor, where he spent his apostolic years, started immediately to pray to him as though he were still among them. This was a natural sequence, since they had known and talked to him personally when he walked among them and performed his wonders in the Master's name. The early devotions had a special quality of intimacy which they have never lost.

Personal Pleas

Appeals to Saint Jude were strictly personal matters, and the spread of the devotion followed the same pattern - for example, when one person had successfully implored help from Saint Jude in some intimate problem which apparently defied solution, he would pass the wonderful news on to a friend who was experiencing troubles. The recipient of the saint's help would relate his experience, tell of the blessings received, and ask: "Why don't you take your problem to Saint Jude?" Thus Saint Jude's powerful intercession and his help in the most difficult cases spread from friend to friend by personal recommendation - a most effective way of popularizing devotion to him.

Thanks to Saint Jude

Another distinctive feature of devotion to Saint Jude has been the constancy with which his clients have thanked him for favors received. It seems that once people were introduced to him they immediately became very friendly, and the friendship endured, for both were pleased with the relationship: the people with Saint Jude's abundant gifts, and the saint with the sincere thanks offered by his friends. Thus the friendship once sealed is never broken.

Public Devotions

It was inevitable that the devotion would enter a new phase, for it had to have some public "clearing house" to sort out the petitions and channel the thanks to Saint Jude in heaven.

This public feature began in 1929, when shrines were established in Chicago under his special title of "Patron of Difficult Cases." The enthusiastic reception given to this public devotion was a singular demonstration of the private attachment held by thousands of people in and around this center of Catholicity.

Increased Popularity

The continual growth of the devotion indicates that its full stature has not been reached.

Devotional shrines to this now-remembered saint have been erected from New York to San Francisco. Many churches being built today are erected under his patronage. Other projects, such as hospitals, and even cities, have been placed under his name and protection. The influence of Saint Jude progresses with increasing enthusiasm in public devotions and in private appeals.

Loyal Friends

In their private prayers and public devotions, the loyal friends of Saint Jude have not only recognized him as an apostle and relative of the Lord but they have also acknowledged him as the special patron and advocate in all their desperate and seemingly hopeless problems. Saint Jude has returned this confidence and trust so abundantly through his pleadings with Christ that a continual shower of grace descends upon his imploring friends. He fills their

outstretched hands with rich gifts from God and makes their hearts beat in throbbing thanks. We can hopefully expect that down through the centuries to come the refrain will still be ascending, like sweet incense, from priest and people:

"Blessed apostle, with confidence we invoke thee!
Saint Jude, help of the hopeless, aid me in my distress!"

About This EBook

The text and map images of this ebook is taken from the book Saint Jude Thaddeus, His Life and His Work, by Father Leo C. Gainor, O.P., M.A. The edition used was printed by the Catechetical Guild Educational Society of Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1956.

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The cover image is a detail of a stained glass window of Saint Jude, date and artist unknown. It is part of the Immaculate Heart of Mary parish church in Bahía Blanca, Argentina, was photographed on 14 March 2017 by PabloHernan2017, and the image swiped from [Wikimedia Commons](#).

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